

Title: **Enhancing Smallholder Household income Through Aquaculture: the Case of Chingale Area in Southern Malawi**

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Abstract: Although smallholder pond aquaculture in Malawi has significant potential to offset the current fish supply deficit of 27000 tons/year, its production is low (800 tons/year). The major constraints for aquaculture production are: lack of fast growing species; poor access to formulated feed; poor knowledge on modern fish farming practices, and poor access to attractive urban markets, among others. If these constraints were addressed and a nucleus of productive and profitable fish farms was established, fish production would increase and unlock the entrepreneurial capacity of smallholder farmers. This paper examines the impact of an aquaculture technology package on fish production and income in Chingale, Southern Malawi. The package included: a fast growing strain of *Oreochromis shiranus*, a program to improve access to quality seed through establishment of community fingerling producers and to link farmers to urban fish traders and consumers. The results show that with community hatcheries and an appropriate distribution model, fingerling mortality and transport costs reduced; access to cheaper quality fingerlings for surrounding communities improved. However in order to produce high quality seed, farmers require initial investment in quality control that also minimizes loss of genetic potential of the brood stock. The use of quality fingerlings and a fast growing fish strain increased fish production and made it more feasible to link farmers to urban fish buyers, where farmers obtained higher prices than they normally get from village markets. The paper concludes that fish production and household income can improve if complementary technologies are implemented as a package.